

Dateline DHMH

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

What's That Ring?

Beginning in mid-November, the sound of ringing phones will be different in the O'Connor Building.

That's because employees in 201 West Preston Street will be getting new phones. The work is tentatively scheduled to happen the weekend of November 14 - 16.

This project is part of a 10-phase, 18-month project conducted by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) that is designed to convert everyone on the 767 exchange to new equipment and voice mail service.

The 301 Building was converted to the new system in mid-August; the 300 Building is scheduled to get the new equipment the weekend of September 19 - 21. DHMH employees in the 500 N. Calvert Street building and in the Schaefer Tower on St. Paul Street are also included in this initiative.

The new voice mail system will be able to handle more calls at one time, so busy signals will hopefully be a thing of the past. Although the system will be slightly different from the one that is currently in use, the user should not notice too much difference.

DBM will be conducting training sessions on the new voice mail. More information on this initiative is available on the DBM Web site at www.dbm.state.md.us by clicking on the 'New Dialing Instructions' link in the left hand border.

Dial '7' Before Extension

The conversion to the new phone system will mean employees will have to alter their dialing patterns.

Once the new system is installed, a five-digit dialing system will be necessary when making internal calls or to other calls on the 767 exchange, provided the other end has the new equipment. When dialing internally, you must dial '7' before the four digit extension.



If the person you are calling still has the older equipment, you will need to dial the full 10-digit phone number (plus '9' to get the outside line.)

Likewise, until you receive the new equipment, if you dial into a building that has the new system, you will need to dial the complete number.

So, between now and when the new system is installed in the O'Connor Building, you must dial the 10-digit phone number when trying to reach someone in the 301 Building. The same will apply for the 300 Building after the September installation in that building.

Technology Conference

"Advancing Public Health Through Technology" is the theme for a day-long conference sponsored by the DHMH Information Resources Management Administration (IRMA). Vendor displays and seminars will be featured.

The event will be held in the O'Connor Building's Lobby Conference Rooms on Wednesday, September 10, from 9:00 a.m. until 3:30 p.m.

The goal of the conference is to define the relationship between technology and public health.

Vendors from various tech fields will have displays and will be available to discuss topics such as public safety communications, geographical information systems (GIS), audio/video conferencing, hand-held devices, and microwave systems.

Continued

Technology Conference

Continued

Seminar topics include Internet security, emergency communications, mobile applications, GIS, the National Electronic Disease Surveillance System (NEDSS), public health directory, public health communications and audio/video conferencing.

Anyone interested in attending any of the seminars is encouraged to register in advance, because space is limited. Log on to www.dhmf.state.md.us/teleconfer-ence/ and click on the 'register' link. Walk-up registration will be available on a space-available basis on the day of the conference. Please check with your supervisor before signing up for these events.

Further information is available by contacting Darla Brown at 410-767-5113 or Jennifer English at 410-767-5081.

DHMH Receives \$2 Million Disease Prevention Grant

The DHMH Family Health Administration has received a one-year, \$2,061,296 grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Programs.

The funds, for the current fiscal year, will be used in four areas: Nutrition and Physical Activity (\$398,964), Arthritis (\$142,161), Tobacco (\$1,370,605, with a 1:1 required state match), and the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) (\$149,566). The Nutrition and Physical Activity dollars are new funds; the other three areas are continuing funds for previously established programs.

Data Center Ribbon Cutting

A highlight of the September 10 public health technology conference will be the official opening of the renovated Data Center located on the service level of the O'Connor Building.

Secretary Sabatini will cut the ribbon beginning at Noon. The ceremony is expected to take 15 minutes. The Data Center will be open to visitors until 3:30 p.m.

The room has undergone extensive renovations, including installation of a raised floor to direct cool air into the computer equipment, back-up power sources, motion detectors and updated fire control and security systems. Two large air conditioning systems have also been installed.

Renovation of this area enables DHMH to consolidate sensitive computer systems into one secure and highly reliable area, thereby ensuring confidentiality of data and protecting people's privacy.

"This grant will increase our capacity to direct the power of prevention toward helping Maryland families stay healthy," said Dr. Russell Moy, director of the Family Health Administration. "One of the many benefits of prevention is containing health care costs by reducing the prevalence of several chronic conditions, such as obesity, asthma and diabetes."

Through the grant, DHMH will be able to impact some of the leading causes of preventable death and disability in Maryland.

Nutrition and physical activity funds will be used to establish a new program within the Center for Preventive Health Services to address obesity. A program coordinator, a nutrition coordinator and a physical activity coordinator will be hired to focus on ways to prevent obesity and other chronic diseases. This new division will develop a statewide plan to prevent and control obesity; educate the public on the health risks of obesity; and solicit community involvement in developing intervention strategies.

Arthritis dollars will fund initiatives for persons affected by arthritis and their families, focusing on prevention of disability and improved quality of life.

Tobacco Prevention and Control funds will be used for community interventions, counter-marketing, policy development and surveillance. BRFSS funds will assist the state in maintaining and expanding this annual survey of health-related factors in the population.

Large numbers of Marylanders are affected by the chronic health problems addressed by this grant.

The obesity grant will provide a much-needed focus; nearly one in five people are classified as obese and therefore at increased risk for diabetes, heart disease, stroke, hypertension, and other chronic conditions.

Tobacco use continues to be an issue — in 2000, over 17 percent of Maryland adults were cigarette smokers. And, according to the 2001 BRFSS, 30 percent of Maryland adults reported having arthritis, including 57 percent of Maryland adults over age 65.

Walkers Take Strides to Fight Breast Cancer



Thousands of walkers will descend on Baltimore's Patterson Park on Sunday, October 26 to raise funds for breast cancer. Proceeds will go to benefit life-saving breast cancer detection and survivorship programs, as well as ground-breaking research projects.

'Making Strides Against Breast Cancer,' a five-mile walk sponsored by the American Cancer Society, allows teams and individual walkers to participate with the same goal in mind — supporting the fight against breast cancer.

Registration begins at 8:00 a.m., with the walk starting at 9:00 a.m. There is no fee to register, and registration is available only on the day of the walk.

The event is a chance to celebrate survivorship, and groups often walk with one or more breast cancer survivors on their team. These survivors are our heroes: our mothers, sisters, daughters, wives, and friends. They are the reason we continue the fight and they remind us all of a very important message: early detection is so important!

The walk is non-competitive, and includes a shorter route around the Park for those who, for any reason, aren't able to complete the five-mile circuit. Last year's inaugural event raised more than \$200,000 and welcomed several thousand walkers.

It is hoped that DHMH will be represented this year with teams

Calendar of Events

Wednesday, September 10 — *conference: Advancing Public Health Through Technology*, O'Connor Building, 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Call Darla Brown at 410-767-5113 or Jennifer English at 410-767-5081 for more information.

Friday, September 25 — **National Recovery Month Kick-off Festival**, on the grounds at the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Administration, Spring Grove Hospital Center, 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Co-sponsored by the Mental Hygiene Administration. Phone 410-402-8611 for more information.

Tuesday, October 7 — *workshop: Effective Performance Management*; University of Maryland School of Social Work; 8:30 a.m. - 4:15 p.m.; \$120. Approved for Category I continuing education credits. Phone 410-706-1839 for more information.

Tuesday and Wednesday, October 7 - 8 — **Blood Drive**, 9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. O'Connor Building lobby. Call Stephanie Brown at 410-767-6403 for more information or to reserve a time.

Thursday, October 9 — **15th Annual Suicide Prevention Conference**, *"Suicide Prevention in a Time of National Crisis"*, Martin's West, 8:00 a.m. - 3:45 p.m. Sponsored by the Governor's Interagency Workgroup on Youth Suicide Prevention. For more information, please contact Henry Westray, Jr. at 410-402-8494.

Thursday, October 9 — *workshop: Energizing Your Staff for Improved Performance and Job Satisfaction*; University of Maryland School of Social Work; 8:30 a.m. - 4:15 p.m.; \$120. Approved for Category I continuing education credits. Phone 410-706-1839 for more information.

Thursday and Friday, October 23 - 24 — **Maryland Rural Summit**, Ocean City. Log onto www.fha.state.md.us/opcs/ and click on the Rural Health Summit' link for more information.

Sunday, October 26 — *fundraising walk: Making Strides Against Breast Cancer*, Patterson Park in Baltimore City. Registration 8:00 a.m., walk at 9:00 a.m. Sponsored by the American Cancer Society. Visit www.cancer.org/stridesonline or phone 1-888-535-4555 x 905 for more information.

of colleagues, families, and friends who want to join in the effort to eliminate breast cancer as a major cause of disability and death in the Baltimore area.

For more information about forming a team or walking as an individual participant, call Margie Weaver at 888-535-4555, extension 905. Additional information is available by logging on to www.cancer.org/stridesonline.

Maryland's New Safety Seat Law Begins October 1

Are you a parent, grandparent or care giver of a child under the age of six? If so, you should know that Maryland's child safety seat law is about to change.

Starting October 1, Maryland law will require that all children younger than six years of age, regardless of weight, must be properly secured in federally-approved child safety seats.

The law also applies to children older than six who weigh 40 pounds or less. Typically, booster seats are the most appropriate choice for children in the newly-covered age group.

"This law provides better protection for children who are too small to be properly restrained by seat belts," said Laura Vetock, **Maryland Kids in Safety Seats**

(KISS) coordinator. "If a child's knees can't bend at the edge of the vehicle seat when he or she is sitting all the way against the back of the seat, then the child should be in a booster seat," she said. It's also important for the lap and shoulder belts to fit properly, otherwise the child could be injured in a crash, even when belted.

The law has both age and weight requirements because children

grow at different rates, and two children the same age may not be the same height and weight. For example, the new law is designed to cover a five-year-old who weighs only 37 pounds, or a 3-1/2 year old who weighs 42 pounds.

Whereas this law has stricter requirements than the old, 'best practice' recommendations call for even higher standards. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the National SAFE KIDS Campaign advocate use of booster seats to age eight and to a height of around 4" 9".

The new law replaces one that required only children under the age of four and under 40 pounds to ride in safety seats. Out-of-state motorists traveling through Maryland only have to follow the old law, although KISS officials recommend they follow requirements established by the new legislation.

While Maryland's safety seat law is the first step in protecting child passengers, the seats must be installed and adjusted properly to do their job. KISS statistics indicate that nine out of 10 safety seats are not being used or installed correctly.

"Child safety seats are very effective when installed and used correctly," said Vetock. "They greatly reduce the risk of injury for infants and toddlers. So it's important to know how to use safety seats the proper way."

Maryland KISS offers free seat checks throughout the state in a variety of locations. To find the

upcoming seat check nearest you, or if you have other questions about child passenger safety, call Maryland KISS at

1-800-370-SEAT, or visit their Web site at www.mdkiss.org.



Editor's Note:

Thanks to Tara Snyder, Community Health Educator in the Center for Health Promotion, Education and Tobacco Use Prevention, for writing this article.



STATE OF MARYLAND

DHMH
Dateline DHMH

A publication of the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Office of Public Relations

Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.
Governor

Michael S. Steele
Lieutenant Governor

Nelson J. Sabatini
Secretary, DHMH

Karen Black
Director of Public Relations

John Hammond
Editor

DHMH Office of Public Relations
201 West Preston Street, Room 506
Baltimore, Maryland 21201
Phone: 410-767-6490
FAX: 410-333-7525
TTY: 1-800-735-2258

To contribute to **Dateline DHMH** or for further information, contact John Hammond, Office of Public Relations, 410-767-6490, hammondj@dnhm.state.md.us. Please visit our Web site at www.dnhm.state.md.us.